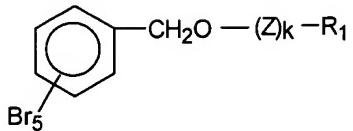


1. (Currently Amended) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether of the formula:



wherein:

Z represents the group -(Y-O)_n-, wherein Y is a linear or branched -(C₂-C₈) alkylene-;

- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;
- k may be 0 or 1;
- R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₁₀) alkyl, a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀) alkylene-OH, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R₁ represents a linear or branched -(C₄-C₁₀) alkyl or a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀) alkylene-OH and when k is 1, R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₄) alkyl, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl.

2. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein Z represents a group selected from -(C₂H₄O)_n and -(C₃H₆O)_n, wherein n represents 2.

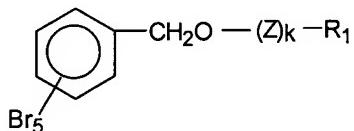
3. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein k=1 and R₁ represents H, methyl or butyl.

4. (Original) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein k=0 and R₁ represents branched (C₈) alkyl or linear (C₆) alkylene-OH.

5. (Currently Amended) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-CH₂-CH₂OCH₃,~~
- (ii) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-CH₂CH₂O(CH₂)₃CH₃,~~
- (iii) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-(CH₂CH₂O)₂CH₃;~~
- (iv) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-(CH₂CH₂O)₂H;~~
- (v) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-(CH₂)₆OH;~~
- (vi) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-CH₂CH(C₂H₅)(CH₂)₃CH₃;~~
- (vii) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-CH₂CH₂OCH₂CH=CH₂,~~
- (viii) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-(C₃H₆O)₂-CH₃~~
- (ix) ~~pentabromobenzyl -O-(C₃H₆O)₂-H~~

6. (Currently Amended) A ~~pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether~~ according to claim 1, for use as a fire retardant of the formula:



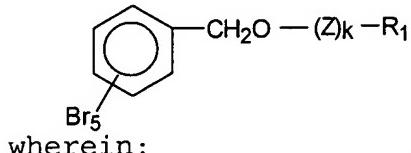
wherein:

- Z represents the group -(Y-O)_n-, wherein Y is a linear or branched -(C₂-C₈) alkylene-;
- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;
- k may be 0 or 1;
- R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₁₀) alkyl, a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀) alkylene-OH, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R₁ represents a linear or branched -(C₄-C₁₀) alkyl or a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀) alkylene-OH and when k is 1, R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₄) alkyl, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl.

7. (Canceled) A ~~pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether~~ according to claim 1, for use as a fire retardant in a

~~polymeric composition or in polymer containing composition.~~

8. (Previously Presented) A fire retarded polymeric or polymer-containing composition comprising a pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether of the formula:



wherein:

- Z represents the group -(Y-O)_n-, wherein Y is a linear or branched -(C₂-C₈) alkylene-;
- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;
- k may be 0 or 1;
- R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₁₀) alkyl, a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀) alkylene-OH, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R₁ represents a linear or branched -(C₄-C₁₀) alkyl or a linear or branched -(C₂-C₁₀) alkylene-OH and when k is 1, R₁ represents hydrogen, a linear or branched -(C₁-C₄) alkyl, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl.

9. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 8, wherein said polymer is selected from the group consisting of chlorinated polyethylene, polyethylene, polypropylene, styrene resins, high-impact polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene copolymer, flexible and rigid polyurethane, epoxy resins and unsaturated polyester resins.

10. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is polypropylene.

11. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is high impact polystyrene (HIPS).

12. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is acryl -butadiene-styrene terpolymer (ABS).

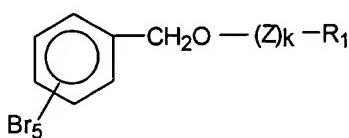
13. (Original) A fire retarded composition according to claim 9, wherein said polymer is polyurethane.

14. (Currently Amended) A fire retarded composition according to claim 8, wherein said polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polypropylene copolymer, high impact polystyrene (HIPS) and acryl -butadiene-styrene terpolymer (ABS), and said pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether is selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂-CH₂OCH₃-
- (ii) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂CH₂O(CH₂)₃CH₃-
- (iii) pentabromobenzyl-O-(CH₂CH₂O)₂CH₃;
- (iv) pentabromobenzyl-O-(CH₂CH₂O)₂H;
- (v) pentabromobenzyl-O-(CH₂)₆OH;
- (vi) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂CH(C₂H₅)(CH₂)₃CH₃;
- (vii) pentabromobenzyl-O-CH₂CH₂OCH₂CH=CH₂-
- (viii) pentabromobenzyl-O-(C₃H₆O)₂-OCH₃
- (ix) pentabromobenzyl-O-(C₃H₆O)₂-H

15. (Amended) A fire retarded composition according claim to any one of claims 8 to 14, further comprising a metal oxide, preferably Sb₂O₃.

16. (Currently Amended) A process for the preparation of a pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether of the formula:



wherein:

- Z represents the group $-(Y-O)_n-$, wherein Y is a linear or branched $-(C_2-C_8)alkylene-$;

- n represents an integer from 2 to 4;

- k may be 0 or 1;

- R_1 represents hydrogen, a linear or branched $-(C_1-C_{10})alkyl$, a linear or branched $-(C_2-C_{10})alkylene-OH$, allyl, or 1,2-dibromopropyl; provided that when k is zero R_1 represents a linear or branched $-(C_4-C_{10})alkyl$ or a linear or branched $-(C_2-C_{10})alkylene-OH$ and when k is 1, R_1 represents hydrogen, a linear or branched $-(C_1-C_4)alkyl$, allyl or 1,2-dibromopropyl, comprising reacting a glycol, a mono-, or di-alcohol of the formula $HO-(Z)_k-R_1$, or the corresponding metal alcoholate thereof, with a pentabromobenzyl halide.

17. (Cancelled) ~~A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, for use as a fire retardant, substantially as described and exemplified in the specification.~~

18. (Cancelled) ~~A process for the preparation of pentabromobenzyl alkyl ethers as defined in claim 1, substantially as described and exemplified in the specification.~~

19. (Cancelled) ~~A fire retarded polymer composition comprising pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, substantially as described and exemplified in the specification.~~

20. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 16, wherein the pentabromobenzyl halide is pentabromobenzyl bromide.

21. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 16, wherein the reaction occurs in the presence of a base.

22. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 16, wherein the linear or branched -(C₂-C₈)alkylene- is selected from the group consisting of -CH₂CH₂- and -CH₂CH(CH₃) --.

23. (Previously Presented) A fire retarded polymeric or polymer-containing composition of claim 8, wherein the linear or branched -(C₂-C₈)alkylene- is selected from the group consisting of -CH₂CH₂- and -CH₂CH(CH₃) --.

24. (Previously Presented) A pentabromobenzyl alkyl ether according to claim 1, wherein the linear or branched -(C₂-C₈)alkylene- is selected from the group consisting of -CH₂CH₂- and -CH₂CH(CH₃) --.